



SEATTLE OPERA  
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

NEWS

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## **SEATTLE OPERA ANNUAL MEETING**

### **Seattle Opera Balances Budget for Eleventh Year in a Row Jenkins' Contract Extended to 2013 Ewa Podles Wins Artist of the Year Award**

SEATTLE—Thursday, July 17, Seattle Opera's Board of Trustees held its 2002/03 Annual Meeting in Seattle Opera's new performance home—Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. The highlights of the meeting included the announcements that (1) Seattle Opera has balanced its operating budget for the eleventh year in a row, (2) the Board's Executive Committee has extended General Director Speight Jenkins' contract to 2013, and (3) contralto Ewa Podles is the winner of Seattle Opera's Artist of the Year award.

#### **CHALLENGES FACED AND MET IN THE 2002/03 SEASON**

Chairman William P. Gerberding opened the meeting with remarks on the milestone Seattle Opera has reached: In 2002/03, the company completed its final season in Mercer Arts Arena, its temporary performance home, and is ready now in 2003/04 to move forward and open its inaugural season in its new home, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. Gerberding commented on how the completion of the new hall involved several organizations working together in partnership: Seattle Center, Seattle Center Foundation, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Seattle Opera.

President John F. Nesholm, in his opening remarks, congratulated members of Seattle Opera's staff not only for their involvement in preparing for the new hall, but also for their careful management of funds in economically difficult times. Seattle Opera's fiscally conservative approach in planning for the transition to the new hall (such as not presenting a summer production in 2002) was a key factor in the company's ability to balance its 2002/03 budget despite the hardships posed by the local economy. Other important factors included a reduction in production expenses during the year and an aggressive fundraising campaign focused on contributions from individuals.

Noting Speight Jenkins' upcoming twentieth anniversary with Seattle Opera, Nesholm stated, "In recognition of Speight's remarkable accomplishments, the Board of Trustees of Seattle Opera, at our annual retreat on April 26, 2003, voted by acclamation to dedicate our new production of *Parsifal* [the first production in the new hall] to our general director, Speight Jenkins. At our June 19, 2003 Executive Committee meeting, the members also voted by acclamation to extend Speight's contract to September 1, 2013."

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### **Financial Report**

Board Vice President Jeff Hanna reported that Seattle Opera has balanced its budget for the eleventh consecutive year. The Opera has projected \$14.3 million in operating expenses and \$14.3 million in operating income for the 2002/03 season. Mainstage ticket revenue was \$4.5 million; total earned income was \$5.2 million. Contributions accounted for \$9.2 million of the Opera's income. Earned income accounted for a lower percentage (36%) of the Opera's income than usual (45%). This is attributable primarily to the shortened, four-opera season (Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, Bellini's *Norma*, and Beethoven's *Fidelio*). With fewer performances to sell, there was less potential ticket revenue, yet many operating expenses remained the same or comparable to prior seasons. Overall, the 2002/03 season was sold at 82 percent of capacity and the number of total paid admissions was 78,033. The Opera had 16,311 subscribers and 14,557 single-ticket buyers.

Seattle Opera has returned to a full, five-opera production schedule for its inaugural season in McCaw Hall, which opens August 2, 2003, with a new production of Wagner's *Parsifal*. (The budget for the 2003/04 season is \$20.7 million; the budget for the 2001/02—a *Ring*—season was \$22.7 million.)

### **Seattle Opera Board of Trustees News**

George Schuchart, Chair of the Nominations Committee, acknowledged trustees new to the Board and those who came on within the last year: Kim A. Anderson, Katarina Bonde, Bruce R. McCaw, Jolene M. McCaw, Dominik Musafia, N. Donn Talenti, Muriel Van Housen. President Nesholm recognized retiring trustees for their service. The meeting then proceeded with the re-election of continuing trustees and the election of officers [see Board Listings].

### **Patsy Bullitt Collins Tribute**

Jenkins announced that Seattle Opera is dedicating its inaugural season in the new Marion Oliver McCaw Hall to the late Dorothy Priscilla "Patsy" Bullitt Collins. Collins was a member of Seattle Opera's Advisory Board and a longtime supporter of the organization.

### **Artist of the Year Award**

Jenkins also announced the winner of Seattle Opera's Artist of the Year award: Ewa Podles, the Polish contralto who made her Seattle Opera debut just months ago singing Adalgisa in a new production of Bellini's *Norma*. The Artist of the Year award is meant to honor the individual singer, conductor, director, or designer who has made the most significant contribution to the success of the season. Participating in the selection process are members of Seattle Opera's Board of Trustees, Producers' Club, and staff, as well as selected members of the local press. This is the company's fourteenth annual selection of Artist of the Year. The voting was tabulated by Clark Nuber P.S. Previous winners include (in chronological order, starting with the 1990/91 season): stage director Francesca Zambello, soprano Sally Wolf, baritone Robert Orth, soprano Jane Eaglen, soprano Harolyn Blackwell, tenor Ben Heppner, countertenor Brian Asawa, soprano Sheri Greenawald, soprano Jane Eaglen, bass Alexander Anisimov, baritone Christopher Maltman, and director Stephen Wadsworth.

Seattle Opera Board of Trustees 2003/04 Officers

Chairman: William P. Gerberding

President: John F. Nesholm

Executive Vice President: Gerard L. Hanauer

Treasurer: Steven C. Phelps

Secretary: Rosemarie Anderson

Vice Presidents: Thomas H. Allen, Steven A. Clifford, Tracy Edgers, Karl J. Ege, James R. Faulstich, Diana Gale, Max E. Gellert, Jeffrey Hanna, Jerry Landeen, James David Raisbeck, Dana A. Rasmussen, Kenneth L. Schubert, Jr., George S. Schuchart, Jr., Jeffrey T. Seely, A. McNair Smith, M.D., and John Elvidge Veblen.

**Retiring, Re-Elected, and New Board Members:**

**Retiring Board Members:** Elizabeth Lee, Thomas Green, M.D., Margaret Taylor, Vinson Cole

**Additions to the Advisory Board:** Margaret Taylor, Vinson Cole

**New Board Members:** Kim A. Anderson, Katarina Bonde, Bruce R. McCaw, Jolene M. McCaw, Dominik Musafia, N. Donn Talenti, Muriel Van Housen

**Re-Elected Board Members:** Thomas H. Allen, Rosemarie Anderson, Cynthia Bayley, James D. Cullen, Sandra B. Dunn, Tracy Edgers, Karl J. Ege, Donald W. Miller, M.D., Vicky Oxley, Christian M. Seifert, Bryan Tagas

Chairman Emeritus  
Lawrence W. Clarkson

Honorary Life Members  
Beverly Brazeau, Donald L. Johnson, Michael M. Scott, and Gertrude E. Sprenger

**Advisory Board**

Claire Bloom, John M. Bloxom, Jr., Vinson Cole, the late Priscilla Bullitt Collins, Norma B. Croco, Jane M. Davis, Mildred K. Dunn, Marion O. Garrison, Laura Ingham, Victoria Ivarsson, Ralph Kaminsky, Duff Kennedy, Wah Lui, Betty McCurdy, Terrence McNally, Marianna B. Price, Sam Rubinstein, Judy Schuchart, Kayla Skinner, Margaret Taylor, Kate Van Ness, and Virginia Wright

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Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera has developed into one of the leading opera companies in the United States. The company is recognized internationally for its theatrically compelling and musically accomplished performances, especially the Opera's interpretations of the works of Richard Wagner. Seattle Opera dedicates its inaugural season in the new Marion Oliver McCaw Hall to Priscilla "Patsy" Bullitt Collins.

Seattle Opera is grateful to the following organizations for their steadfast major institutional support: ArtsFund, Bank of America, The Boeing Company, Beethoven/Classical KING FM 98.1, Charles E. Stuart Charitable Foundation, The James and Sherry Raisbeck Singers' Endowment, King County Cultural Development Authority, Kreielsheimer Foundation, The Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds, Microsoft Corporation, National Endowment for the Arts, Nesholm Family Foundation, PONCHO, Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, Seattle Opera Guild, Sherman Clay Pianos, and Washington State Arts Commission. Seattle Opera is a participant in the Seattle Arts Stabilization Project, a joint venture of the Seattle Arts Stabilization Committee and the National Arts Stabilization Fund.